The new $5 note

Celebrating the federation of our nation

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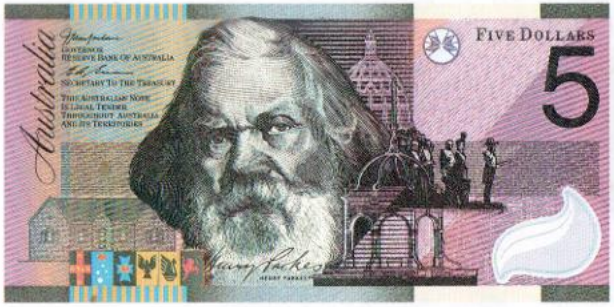
Making our currency safer for you.



Australia will celebrate the Centenary of Federation in many ways throughout 2001. As part of the celebrations, a new $5 note will be issued from 1 January 2001. The new note features Sir Henry Parkes and Catherine Helen Spence, two prominent Australians who made unique contributions to the birth and development of our nation.

The new Federation $5 note will circulate alongside the current $5 note.

Like our other polymer notes, the Federation $5 note has anti-counterfeiting features which make Australia's currency notes the safest in the world.

Australia comes of age

On January 1, 1901, the Commonwealth of Australia came into being following the passage of the Constitution Bill through the British Parliament the previous year. It united all the states of Australia, and represented the birth of our nation.

Sir Henry Parkes

Sir Henry Parkes (1815 - 1896) has often been referred to as the 'Father of Federation'. An early advocate of reform, he gave the federation movement new impetus with his call for a federated Australia at Tenterfield in 1889. Parkes presided over the first National Australasian Convention in Sydney in 1891, where a Constitution Bill was drafted for submission to the Parliaments. A powerful but ageing figure, Parkes died four years before Federation came about.

Catherine Helen Spence

Catherine Helen Spence (1825 - 1910) was a journalist, social reformer and novelist, and a prominent supporter of electoral reform. She stood for election as a South Australian candidate for the Australasian Federal Convention of 1897, to emphasise the issue of proportional parliamentary representation. Spence did not gain a place at the Convention but achieved fame as the first woman to stand for election to public office in Australia. She believed that the highest goal to which a united Australia could aspire was the truly democratic representation of all its people.

Note details

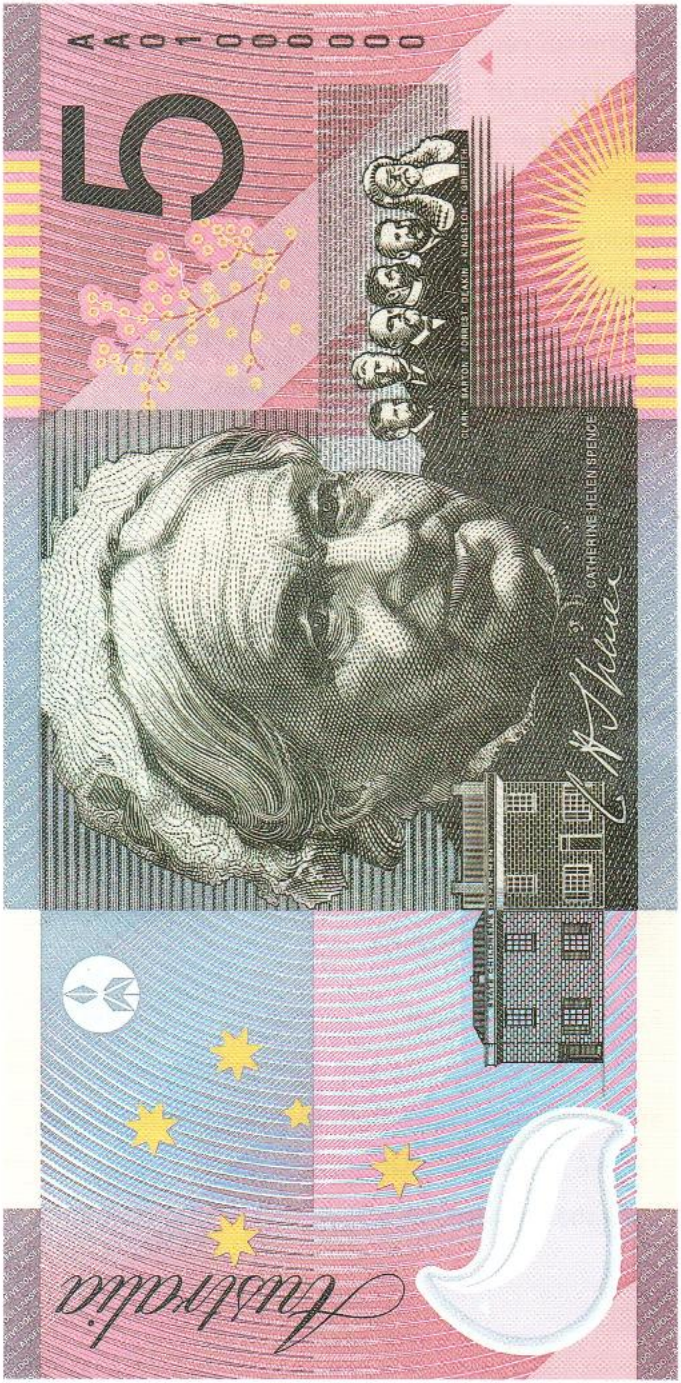
The Federation $5 note is the same size as the current $5 note, being 65mm high and 130mm long. It is also similar in colour to the current $5 note.

The designer of the note is Garry Emery, one of Australia's leading graphic designers, who also designed the current $20 note.

Further information

If you would like any more information about the new Federation $5 note, please phone 1800 633 220, or visit our website at www.rba.gov.au.

Australia's Currency Notes



Front

Back

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